



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: May 19, 2009

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Recreation Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Private Party Sale Of Surplus Lifeguard Tower

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council authorize the Parks and Recreation Director to sell one surplus wood beach lifeguard tower to a private party interested in preserving the tower as an architectural resource.

DISCUSSION:

The Recreation Division would like to sell one remaining surplus wood beach lifeguard tower to an interested private party. The previous 5 wood beach lifeguard towers had badly deteriorated and were replaced with fiberglass towers using Proposition 40 grant funding in March 2007. The wood lifeguard towers, which were badly deteriorated, were demolished, and the remaining 2 lifeguard towers, which are not safe for use by the lifeguard service, are taking up desirable storage space at the City annex yard.

The Recreation Division has received a request from Robin Donaldson to purchase one of the remaining lifeguard towers. Mr. Donaldson is a former City lifeguard who currently practices architecture in Santa Barbara and has an architectural and cultural interest in preserving this structure.

Although neither the City Code nor Charter require Council approval for the disposal of personal property, in the interests of transparency staff's practice has been to seek Council authorization any time City property is disposed of without a competitive process.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Staff has researched the value of scrap metal, and the City would receive a total of \$50 for the scrap metal frame of the lifeguard tower. All other materials would be broken down and disposed of in the landfill. Mr. Donaldson has offered to pay the City \$100 to obtain a lifeguard tower for preservation. Mr. Donaldson will obtain the required insurance indemnifying the City and will make necessary arrangements for the pick-up and transportation of the lifeguard tower.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT:

The private sale of this surplus lifeguard tower would preserve an architectural and cultural resource and divert the debris from future demolition away from a landfill.

ATTACHMENT: Robin Donaldson e-mail dated February 2, 2009

PREPARED BY: Rich Hanna, Aquatic Recreation Supervisor

SUBMITTED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks and Recreation Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office

To: Rich Hanna

Rich, hope this is helpful for you to explain my request. Let me know if you need anything else and whether it would be helpful for me to attend any meetings.

Best,

Robin Donaldson

REQUEST:

This letter is to document my request for obtaining ownership and accepting full liability for an abandoned City of Santa Barbara lifeguard tower. For the record, I was a City of Santa Barbara Beach Lifeguard (Junior Guard Instructor) during the summers of 1978-83. I am now an architect practicing and living in Santa Barbara and have an architectural as well as cultural interest in preserving this structure. I do not have any commercial ambition for this structure, I simply appreciate the towers and hope to save one from being demolished. Hopefully my efforts will preserve this era City of Santa Barbara lifeguard towers.

POSSIBLE CULTURAL RESOURCE:

My intent is to offer historical preservation of a unique little structure that in my view has cultural value that may currently be overlooked but someday could be considered worthy of preservation. I believe that Lifeguard Towers have a cultural value as icons of California and Santa Barbara beach lifestyle. They have been an accepted part of the beach landscape in Southern California for almost 100 years. I know some people see them as utilitarian eyesores on the beach, but I see a charming and unique piece of Santa Barbara (and California) history. These particular towers are unique to this city (unlike the mass produced fiberglass model that replaced them) and I hope that we can preserve this generation of tower design.

FUTURE:

I hope to find a permanent home for the tower somewhere in Southern California amongst other towers that are being preserved. At this time it is too soon to say where that will be. I am collecting data on Lifeguard Towers and hope to publish a book about the history of these structures along the coastal cities of California.

LOGISTICS:

I own property in the city that is currently being used as a storage yard. I intend to store it there until I find it a permanent home.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please let me know if there is any other information I can provide.

Sincerely,

Robin Donaldson AIA

Robin Donaldson AIA

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